The offices for the father of the World Wide Web (Timothy Berners-Lee), the pioneer of robotic engineering (Rodney Brooks), the premier rabble-rouser of linguistics (Noam Chomsky), and the patron saint of free software (Richard Stallman) should be a bit more special than a boxy shed. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) thought so when it hired Frank Gehry to replace its aging, asbestos-laden Building 20 (a temporary structure erected in 1943 to house radar researchers) with the 700,000-square-foot, $300 million Stata Center, a research laboratory devoted to computer, information, and intelligence sciences.

The architecture is classic post-Bilbao Gehry, a cauldron of curves, angles, color, and materials designed to stir up creativity while attracting top researchers and combating MIT's reputation as a dull, dreary place.

“New science center is meant to unleash creativity.”

The city revamps sidewalk café regulations

“NY’s cafés get jolt”

“In good weather, I eat all my meals outdoors,” said Amanda Burden. “I love sidewalk cafés. They add such character to a neighborhood.” Burden has been touting the virtues of sidewalk cafés—their ability to enhance street life, to make neighborhoods safer, contribute to the city’s economy—since Mayor Bloomberg appointed her planning commissioner in January 2002. Last week was a special triumph for her, when City Council unanimously approved her pet initiative allowing a new category of small, unenclosed sidewalk cafés on streets where they were

Gushing Over the Gherkin

On a recent spring day in London, the lenses of the media were clustered around a striking and provocative object, one that has made the most dramatic intervention in the city’s skyline for more than a generation. Tall, slender, exquisitely proportioned, with sleek skin and every material surface carefully considered: It was Lord Norman Foster, making one of his rare public appearances to launch his most important London building to date.

The building’s official name is 30 St. Mary Axe, but London’s first tower in a quarter of a century is already better known as Swiss Re, after its developer, and of course, “The Gherkin.” It has achieved the near-impossible feat of being well received by both the design community and Londoners at large—the latter a conservative and hostile audience for contemporary architecture. But when all the current fuss dies down, will its celebrity survive closer scrutiny?

“Gushing Over the Gherkin”

RESTORATION COMPLETE ON WASHINGTON SQUARE ARCH

ARCH GRAND, AGAIN

The Washington Square Arch has been restored as a symbol of New York’s grandeur. The rehabilitated arch was unveiled April 30th, after $2.7 million and a year of work that included the installation of a bird-proofing system, the re-carving of sculptural elements, and repairs to its interior stairway and walls. Natural weathering, pollution, birds, and vandalism had all contributed to the decline of the arch, which was designed by Stanford White in the 1890s.

The renovation project was funded in part by the city (split among the Mayor’s Office, City Council, and Manhattan Borough office) and in part by New York University (NYU),

 Restoration completed on Washington Square Arch

New York architecture and design

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Londoners are agog over Foster’s latest, but can it live up to the hype?

Gushing Over the Gherkin

On a recent spring day in London, the lenses of the media were clustered around a striking and provocative object, one that has made the most dramatic intervention in the city’s skyline for more than a generation. Tall, slender, exquisitely proportioned, with sleek skin and every material surface carefully considered: It was Lord Norman Foster, making one of his rare public appearances to launch his most important London building to date.

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There is no denying the drama of its silhouette, which curves gently outward from its base and then diminishes to a single point at the top, but on continued on page 2.

Though it has just wrapped up a massive new addition to the Jersey City skyline, Goldman Sachs has set its sights on Manhattan. At a meeting with the Battery Park City Committee of Community Board 1 on May 4th, company representatives and Harry Cobb of Pei Cobb Freed unveiled plans for a new 800-foot headquarters that would occupy the last empty commercial lot in Battery.continued on page 3
The Architecture League, the new Center for Architecture, and many other museums, institutions, and architecture schools in the tri-state region go to great lengths to organize lecture series and symposia every year. Between them, they bring in a parade of important architects, designers, and thinkers from everywhere in the world, ranging from up-and-coming talents to European superstars. These public lectures are used as a device by schools to inform their students about the outside world of design, and to publicize their own programs (they often spend considerable resources to mail well-designed posters to every other school in the country).

It's impossible, of course, for busy professionals and academics to see but a handful of these presentations every season. It's a shame because lectures allow a speaker to describe a process in a spontaneous manner, and provide a personal narrative that large monographs or even newspaper articles cannot. They also allow audiences to question or even challenge speakers to clarify their position and participate in a debate that yields the type of experience that not only informs but moves the profession forward.

In this issue, we review several lectures. Daniel Sherer put his gloss on Francesco Dal Co's reading of Raphael Soriano, which he presented at Columbia University. When Rafael Moneo spoke at Cooper Union, our reviewer Claire Zimmerman found the architect both nostalgic to be back in the house of John Hejduk and torn by becoming perhaps less of a theorist and more of a builder. Cooper also presented the lecture series "Resonating Frequencies," organized by Christopher Janney, which owed a certain appeal to the audience. Architects are subconsultants. Plan," 4.6.2004). We would like to point out, however, that Jason Prior of EDAY is leading the consortium producing the master plan. The 500-hectare Olympic Precinct is being designed by EDAY. Our colleagues at Foreign Office Architects are subconsultants.

The interiors are disappointing, largely because Foster's office didn't do the fit-out. However, the clarity and elegance of the planning solution, which in effect squares the circle, soon overwhelms any banality. Each floor is divided into six rectangular segments radiating out from the core, and the triangular spaces between these fingers are left open. On each floor, the plan is rotated slightly from the one below, so that the triangles stack up into sweeping diagonal spaces that spiral around the building, expressed externally as stripes of different colored glazing. The gardens that were to cascade downward through these spaces fell victim to cost restraints, and are too bare and small to be of much obvious value, productive or aesthetic. However, the atria form an integral part of the building's environmental control, which is perhaps its true claim to fame. It is being widely promoted as being the first in a new generation of "environmentally progressive" tall office buildings. As wind strikes the structure, it accelerates around the curves, forcing fresh air in and sucking stale air out of banks of operable windows within the spirals, making them the "lungs" of the building. This contributes to the potential energy savings of up to 50 percent, although of course this can only work on those rare London days when it's fine enough to leave the windows open!

This is undoubtedly a major work of architecture, and one that will influence the design of tall towers around the world. But there is a real danger that the largely uncritical praise being heaped on it may harm its reputation in the long run.

However much it may represent an improvement on conventional solutions, a building that can only conserve energy given climate weather conditions hardly deserves to be described as a "green" building. It is typically referred as a "landmark" building or new "icon," though one is tempted to ask, an icon of what exactly? Of Swiss Re, or Foster? It's certainly not iconic of London, it's not a public building, nor does it give much back to the city from which it takes so much. It's a depressing prospect if we now conceive of the gleaming commercial towers of multinational corporations as the authentic landmarks of our cities.

JOE KERR
GOD SAVE THE DETAILS

Given what we’ve seen of some of his other projects, we expected Rem Koolhaas’ new student center at the Illinois Institute of Technology to already show signs of, uh, wear. But while we’ve learned that the reigning rhetoritect’s first completed American building has in fact suffered from a leaky roof, our visit last month to Mies’ campus found us more concerned about Helmut Jahn’s also-hyped new residence hall next door. EavesDrop’s undercover investigation into living conditions at the dorm, which opened last summer just weeks before Koolhaas’ structure, brought reports of waterlogged windows, faulty air conditioning, flaking floors and, with roughly double the rents of older campus housing, a whopping vacancy rate approaching 40 percent. An IIT rep confirms that HVAC filters had to be unclogged or replaced early on, and that several windows haven’t done their job. And this summer, much of the building’s concrete floors—which have proven no match for an aggressive army of chair castors—will have to be refinished. Meanwhile, the school is offering such incentives as a month’s free rent and wireless Internet cards for students who return this fall, and the rep says that occupancy is looking up.

DIA PAINTS ROSY PICTURE

For months, we’ve tuned in to mounting chatter about DIA’s plans for its Chelsea galleries, which closed in January for structural upgrades. Speculating that DIA doesn’t need the facility (and its costs) now that it has its sprawling new Beacon Park City, now a first completed American building in North America,” said Galen. And now, we’ve heard rumbles that it’s trying to sell the building. However, a DIA spokesperson flatly denies all this, and insists that the institution expects to raise the $30 million it needs for both an endowment and the cost of construction, which reportedly will begin in the fall. It’s already added something to its coffers: Director Robert Altman has rented the facility for several months this summer, to shoot a movie about the art world called Paint.

NEW ARCHITECTURE?

We hear big staff changes are coming to Architecture magazine, with the recent resignations of assistant editor Julia Mandell, associate editor Anna Holtzman and publisher Suzanne Tron Haber. Mandell is headed to grad school and Holtzman is leaving to work on a film project, while Haber attributes the end of her four-year tenure to “personal reasons.” Meanwhile, we’re getting wind of rumors, neither confirmed nor denied by editor-in-chief Chris Sullivan, that the magazine may be preparing for some kind of relaunch this fall.

GEHRY-GO-ROUND

If you’ve ever found the twists and turns of a Frank Gehry building to be a little confusing, you’re not alone. At a press event earlier this month at the architect’s characteristically crowded new Stata Center at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, we listened in as a staffer described how Gehry made his exit after a luncheon that day on the building’s fourth floor. “How do I get out to Vassar Street [which borders the site]?” we’re told Gehry asked. Um, if he can’t figure it out...

MISSING MANHATTAN

continued from front page Park City, now a parking lot bound by Vesey, Murray, and West streets. “We wanted to stay close to home,” said Timur Galen, Goldman Sachs’ managing director. That begs a question: Given that the company just built 1.5 million square feet in the Battery, why was it so quick to leave Manhattan? (The company will indeed occupy part of the building, but it appears that fewer departments will make the cross-river trip than was originally planned.) Whether Liberty bonds and other financial inducements for building in Lower Manhattan will compare with the $160 million in tax breaks New Jersey doled out as report­ed in The New York Times on December 13, 2003) is uncertain. Galen said the company chose the Battery Park City site for its proximity to the World Financial Center and its 75,000-square-foot footprint which would accommodate large floor plates for trading floors. Furthermore, because the site comes with a recently conducted environmental impact study (EIS) in place, the site is “ready to go”—vital since leases for Goldman Sachs’ current downtown offices expire in 2008 and 2009. The tower will meet Battery Park City’s strict environmental standards, including the “most sustainable commercial building in North America,” said Galen. The company intends its new 2 million square feet of office and trading space to include a conference center occasionally open to public use—a concession to the notoriously fussy community board. The zoning amendment, which designated the site as commercial, passed easily, the only strong objection coming from committee member Tom Goodkind, who said the building would undermine the residential character of Battery Park City.

Steven Holl Architects teamed with his former employee, Swiss architect Justin Rüssli, to win an open international competition to design the Swiss ambassador’s residence in Washington, D.C., beating out ten other finalists, all of them Swiss, including Mario Campi and Angelí Graham Pieninger-Scholl. The winning scheme, announced in 2001, is a combination of technical precision, environmentalism, and cool modernism. Construction is scheduled to begin this summer and should be completed by winter 2005. Designed to meet Minergie Standards, the Swiss version of LEED, the $12 million building will use higher insulation values, exterior shades, and south-facing glass surfaces for passive solar gain. A sedum roof garden containing photovoltaic cells will reduce heat transfer and water runoff while extending the roof life. The two-story 21,400-square-foot residence will replace the current 1959 residence designed by William Lescaze, a Swiss-American architect. The new building has a cruciform plan, vaguely reminiscent in plan of the Swiss flag. The choice of charcoal-colored concrete, sand­ blasted structural glass channels, and slate was driven, said Holl, by his memories of Swiss rock formations and snow. Swiss ambassador Christian Bickenstorfer said, “The design took best advant­ age the rare view of the Washington Monument.”

JAMES WAY

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AIA executive director Fredric Bell was awarded the 2004 Barrier-Free America Award from the Paralyzed Veterans of America for his contribution to the accessibility of redevelopment plans for Lower Manhattan.


This year’s MIPIM Future Projects awards included the New York Sports and Convention Center by Kohn Pedersen Fox in its “urban communities and sustainability” category.

Bernard Tachumi Architects won in the institutional category of the Ceramic Tiles of Italy Design Competition 2004 for his Paul L. Cejas School of Architecture at Florida International University, Miami. Assoplastrile, the Association of Ceramic Tile and Refractory Manufactures, and the Italian Trade Commission sponsored the competition.

The AIA Committee on the Environment (COTE) announced its Top Ten Green Projects for 2004, including the Solaire at Battery Park City by Cesar Pelli & Associates Architects; the Plaza at PFL Center in Allentown, Pennsylvania, by Robert A. M. Stern Architects; and Greytron Baker in Yonkers by New Jersey-based Cybul & Cybul Architects. The awards will be presented on May 27th at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C.

The National Academy of Design Museum awarded two $1,000 prizes for architecture work included in its 72nd Annual Exhibition. The Dessie Greer Prize went to Diller + Scofidio and the Olivine Lance Prize to Paul Rosenblatt.

New York Building Congress honored Skanska president and CEO Stuart E. Graham and MTA chairman Peter S. Kalikow with its 83rd Anniversary Leadership Awards.

I. M. Pei won the first Peopling of America Award honoring a United States immigrant who did not come through Ellis Island. Pei emigrated from China in 1936 to study architecture at MIT and Harvard.

In its Salute to Women of Achievement in May, Professional Women in Construction honored Linda Christensen of Tishman Realty & Construction; Debra J. White of New York Power Authority; Heil L. Blau of Fox & Fowle Architects, and Lois Weiss, a journalist and photographer.

Metropolis presented its first Next Generation Design Prize to Cambridge-based architecture firm Single Speed Design, for its plan to salvage pieces of Borden’s demolished motorway and transform them into housing.

NYC’S CAFÉS GET JOLT
continued from front page
previously prohibited.

According to the Department of City Planning’s (DCP) research that led to the initiative, Manhattan has a disproportionate number of streets where cafes are prohibited compared to the other boroughs. To prepare the proposal, agency employees hit the streets, measuring sidewalks, studying traffic, analyzing adjacent land uses, and counting pedestrians. The result was a fine-grained map of sidewalks that the DCP recommends as suitable for small cafes, specified as having “a single row of tables and chairs occupying only 4.5 feet of sidewalk.”

The newly “unfrozen” streets include many in Chinatown, SoHo, Union Square, Midtown, most major cross streets south of 49th Street as well as avenues including Third, Lexington and Madison Avenues. Restaurants may begin submitting applications immediately.

The applications will go through the standard sidewalk licensing process, which itself was drastically overhauled last year. On February 10, 2003, Mayor Bloomberg approved the streamlining of the sidewalk-café licensing process as part of his pledge to make the city more “business friendly.”

Previously, various city agencies, including the DCP, Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA), and Department of Transportation (DOT) were part of the notoriously drawn-out, bureaucratic café license approval. Now, the DCA controls the entire process. The DCA has reduced the process to about 110 days, from filing to licensing, down from 226 days in an average cycle a year ago.

In revamping the licensing process, the DCA also took a closer look at existing guidelines. “We realized we had a problem and an opportunity,” said director of the Department of Consumer Affairs Gretchen Dykstra.

“One nice impact we have seen in our district is that restaurants have reduced the amount of space they occupy, since they are now paying more for it.”

There are over 200 sidewalk cafes in Community Board 7, more than any other in the city. More contentious among the new regulations is the requirement of a 3-foot traffic-sidewalk cafe, while those in two rows of tables, but never for a single row of tables against a building wall. James Garrettson, an architect specializing in sidewalk cafes who provided initial feedback to the DCA’s licensing revisions, argued, “There is no ADA issue with a row of tables against a building without a barrier. All the seats are 100 percent accessible. Even with a barrier, only 50 per cent of the seats are required to be handicapped accessible.

Many existing cafes have been approved with aisles of less than 3 feet.”

This issue might frustrate applicants to the new small sidewalk cafe law, which frees up several streets that are only 12 or 13 feet wide. Under the DCA’s regulations, new applicants will likely be permitted to have tables that are more appropriate for sipping a latte than dining.

As the DCA presses enforcement, there are several other new regulations that might affect the appearance of the city’s sidewalks. For the revised law, café furniture must be 10 feet clear from either side of a standpipe.

The new regulations also require restaurants to mark the borders of their café on the sidewalk in white lateral traffic paint. CATHERINE LINDSAY

The new Small Sidewalk Café law is geared at unenclosed cafes occupying 4.5 feet of sidewalk space.
LIN RETURNS TO VIETNAM MEMORIAL
Maya Lin has joined the jury that will choose the winning design for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial's new Education Center. Lin said, "I am delighted to be a part of the process and to be able to help select a design consistent with preserving the integrity of the memorial site."

LOOKING UP
U.S. architecture firms' earnings showed improvement in March, especially in the southern states. However, compensation gains "are expected to be modest" according to Kermit Baker, AIA's chief economist. Billings hit the plus side between December 2003 and March 2004 with steadily rising inquiries hitting a high point since a July 2003 low. Indicating the rise in architecture billings, over 75,000 construction jobs were created in March. Non-registered architects are expected to reap the largest compensation increases at 4.4 percent while interns will eek out a 2.6 percent increase. Licensed architects can expect a 3.3 percent increase.

NEW SEAT IN MILAN
Pei Cobb Freed & Partners, Caputo Partnership, Sistema Duemila has won a competition to design the New Seat of the Lombardy Regional Government in Milan. The winning entry comprises a 160-meter-tall tower, a 38-meter-tall office complex, an auditorium, a public park, parking, and additional public amenities totaling 140,500 square meters. A group led by Frank Gehry placed second while the team of Metrogramma, Foreign Office Architects, and Luca Molinari came in third. Other entrants included Steven Holl Architects and Guy Nordensen, Foster and Partners, Hans Kolhoff, and Coop Himmelblau.

DOWNTOWN BROOKLYN PLAN APPROVED
The City Planning Commission (CPC) approved a comprehensive plan for downtown Brooklyn on May 10th that combines increasing zoning allocations with infra-structure improvements resulting in 5.4 million square feet of new space, housing units, retail, transit areas, and improved public spaces, including a pedestrian friendly re-landscaped Flatbush Avenue.

MIES RE-OPENS
Mies van der Rohe's Farnsworth House opened to the public on May 15th. The National Trust for Historic Preservation bought the Farnsworth House at an auction at Sotheby's in December 2003. The Landmarks Preservation Council of Illinois will operate the house as a museum.

OKLAHOMA CITY FED BUILDING DEDICATED
The new $33 million 180,000-square-foot federal building in Oklahoma City by Ross Barney + Jankowski Architects of Chicago and Atkins Benham of Oklahoma City was dedicated on May 3rd. The building opened in December 2003, eight and a half years after its predecessor was bombed. The Oklahoma City National Monument, designed by Butzer Design Partnership in collaboration with Sasaki Associates, was dedicated in April 2000.

RE-CREATION IN CHELSEA
Last month, the six-story, $22.4 million Chelsea Recreation Center at 430 West 25th Street opened. Conceived in the 1960s, the center began construction in 1973 but was left unbuilt in 1976 due to New York City's financial crisis. The project remained dormant until 2001, when Rosemary O'Keefe, former Deputy Commissioner for Recreation at the Parks Department, spearheaded an effort to resurrect the project.

Koudosmitis Architects revised the original design to address more current needs. The center houses a gymnasium, computer center, and swimming pool.

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DREARY BUS TERMINAL AT 42ND STREET GETS NEW LOOK
Lighting designer Leni Schwendinger takes offense at what many consider the most interesting nighttime lighting street traffic. Principal of Light Projects Ltd., she is trying to overturn this idea in a collaborative project with

PORT AUTHORITY LIGHTENS UP
Lighting designer Leni Schwendinger takes offense that many consider the most interesting nighttime lighting street traffic. Principal of Light Projects Ltd., she is trying to overturn this idea in a collaborative project with

Passanela + Klein Stolzman + Berg Architects, the $2 million renovation of the Port Authority Bus Terminal's Ninth Avenue bridges, known as the Triple Bridge Gateway. Their goal is to transform the disjunct structure into a welcoming entrance to Manhattan.

The Port Authority of New York & New Jersey, Community Board 4, the Design Trust for Public Space, and Hell's Kitchen Neighborhood Association began discussing the project in 1995 as part of efforts to direct the area's development. The renovation is the first major improvement to the bridges in over 30 years. In 2002 work began to remove hazardous materials, replace its deck, and upgrade mechanical and electrical systems.

Since February, work has been proceeding on a new lighting scheme for the Triple Bridge Gateway, employing permanent scaffolding, a perforated metal scrim, and reflective lighting techniques to accentuate the terminal's structure and vehicular movement. The system also reflects light onto the street in a changing array of color and intensity creating a "luminous room," explained Schwendinger. The project flanks the prevalent reality of street lighting—typically all or nothing—balancing security with aesthetics.

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TOLERANCE TRAINING CENTER TARGETS CIVIL SERVANTS
High Tolerance
The new Simon Wiesenthal Center at a Jewish human rights nonprofit devoted to preserving the memory of the Holocaust by promoting tolerance. The $8 million center, funded mostly by state and city grants, targets civil servants, including educators, law enforcement officials, and state/local government practitioners, though any group can reserve a tour.

Tours begin in the center's double-height lobby where a curvy, 200-foot-long translucent wall is designed to catch the eye of passersby. The wall, constructed mostly of Plexiglas panels, features embedded plasma monitors, back lighting, and projection screens. Horton Lees Brogden Lighting Design created an integrated fiber optic lighting system which generates a low-level glow appropriate to the center's somber mood.

Inside, an aluminum canopy resembling the curved ribs of a whale houses The Millennium Machine, a game show about child slavery and workers' rights, and the Holocaust Screening Room, which presents a film about genocide in Europe, Rwanda, and Bosnia. "We wanted the structure to resemble a historic relic or artifact, a skeletal remain," said Scott Hunter of NBBJ.

The tour concludes with a focus on New York City's High Tolerance Training Center. Headquartered in Los Angeles, the Simon Wiesenthal Center is a Jewish human rights nonprofit devoted to preserving the memory of the Holocaust by promoting tolerance. The $8 million center, funded mostly by state and city grants, targets civil servants, including educators, law enforcement officials, and state/local government practitioners, though any group can reserve a tour.

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GLAM ROCKS

Swarovski, the famed Austrian crystal manufacturer, recently released its third annual Crystal Palace Collection, a group of crystal chandeliers updated for contemporary audiences by ten of-the-moment designers. The brainchild of Nadja Swarovski, the great-great-granddaughter of company founder, Daniel Swarovski, Crystal Palace was concocted as a sales booster for a company with a staid and traditional reputation. The project has increased the company's chandelier sales by 12 percent from 2002 to 2003, up from the usual one or two percent increases in previous years, according to Swarovski.

This year's crop of designs is as varied as its designers. Artists and sculptors along with product and lighting designers created chandeliers that range from fanciful glam to techno-hip. Ingo Maurer said of his design, "I dreamt I saw three chairs flying in the sky. They sparkled like diamonds but at the same time they were covered with snow. Sometimes they were part of the universe and the sky, but sometimes they transformed into architecture." His design, made of three Gio Ponti Superleggera Chairs covered in crystals, is called Gio Ponti in the Sky with Diamonds.

Meanwhile, Ron Arad's Lolita is a spiraling pixel board coated in 2,100 crystals whose 1,050 LEDs light up to display text messages sent to the telephone number 011-39-3401-761-348. "Please send text messages. See your words in light. There is no censorship," encouraged Arad.

Constantin and Laurene Boym's Crystal Rugs is a group of woven sheets of crystal draped over a simple rod containing a light source. "Our chandelier should have been called Crystal Laundry," said Constantin Boym. While the showpiece is 15 feet long, the design is modular and can be constructed at a smaller size for domestic use.

Other artists who contributed to this year's collection include Ben Jakober and Yannick Vu, Barber Osgerby, Yves Béhar, Tord Boontje, David Collins and Chris Levine, Matali Crasset, and Jeff Leatham.

The chandeliers are one of a kind, sold on a made-to-order basis. Priced from $13,000 to $800,000, they are meant less as a product and more as a message: Crystals are a material of the future as well as the past.

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The Stata Center is just part of the school's major effort to remake itself, which involves a design-driven building campaign including the Simmons Hall dormitory by Steven Holl, completed in 2002, as well as a brain and cognitive science center by Charles Correa and a new media arts and sciences building by Fumihiko Maki and Leers Weinzapfel, both under construction. The Stata Center consists of a lower podium supporting two tall towers and several pavilions, each devoted to a special research group and thus endowed with a unique appearance. "We began thinking of them as actors in a play," said project architect Craig Webb. Truth is, they are closer to cartoon characters, with goofy nicknames to boot—the Kiva, the Helmet, the Nose, the Twins, Buddha, the Giraffe, et cetera. Private, quiet work takes place in the upper recesses of the towers and pavilions, while chance encounters occur in the spaces of the lower podium. The lower level is an open "street," filled with light, color, and connections—visual and actual—to just about everything else in the building. Broad stair landings double as meeting spaces. The most dazzling area is a contained outdoor plaza, which acts like a stage where the cartoon characters gather.

Dabbling in behavioral engineering, Gehry created what he called a "village" setting, meant to force the building's resident geeks against their natural tendencies—to retreat into private offices—and instead, to bump into each other, catch glimpses of each other's work, and inspire ideas and collaborations. As a result, the building is informal in plan, with clear sightlines in every direction and a meandering circulation system that begins with four separate entrances.

The seeming haphazardness of many of Gehry's buildings has more logic in this case than in his previous works. Already, the Stata's researchers have colonized the building's nooks and crannies with a messiness that makes the odd corners and disorderly detailing acceptable in a way they wouldn't be in a museum or concert hall. The architecture is relaxed, welcoming, and not too precious. Its users have not shied away from bringing in their own (often dumpy) furniture or erecting plywood partitions. Duct-like aluminum trays snake along upper walls, carrying miles of cable throughout the building. They are inelegant but functional, anticipating the fact that technology will change and cables might soon be obsolete.

In one regard, computer-dependent Gehry was a fitting choice for the project. But the construction of his CAD-generated forms remains largely craft-based and rooted in old-fashioned materials and techniques. In the context of MIT, this quality is unfortunate, given that its architecture school has produced compelling research about "smart" buildings—structures with intelligent skins, interactive networks, sustainability measures. The Stata Center is, sadly, not as smart as the people who work there. In part, this is due to the requests of its users. "People wanted traditional light switches," Gehry joked, as opposed to lighting controlled by motion sensors, for example. But what better opportunity to test new ways of building than for a den of brainiacs? CLH

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You're Only 3 Blocks Away From A More Impressive Project.

Gehryville continued from front page
Towards A New Modern.

As the Museum of Modern Art's eagerly anticipated new home nears completion, Aric Chen revisits the project and offers a preview.

One might not think Philip L. Goodwin was an obvious choice to design the first permanent home for the Museum of Modern Art when, in 1934, the five-year-old institution decided it had outgrown its cramped 53rd Street townhouse. In fact, its legendary (and soon-to-be furious) founding director, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., had already set his mind on Europe and the likes of Mies when he learned that the museum's board of trustees had all but awarded the commission to Goodwin, a onetime Beaux Arts designer who also happened to be a fellow trustee. Barr then did his best to arrange a collaboration with Mies but Goodwin refused to work with a foreign architect and chose instead to partner with a 29-year-old who had worked on Radio City Music Hall named Edward Durrell Stone.

Fortunately, nepotism, nationalism, and backstabbing don't seem to have played a noticeable role in MoMA's also-unexpected selection of Japanese architect Yoshio Taniguchi for its latest, and most ambitious, expansion. With the bulk of construction expected to be completed in July and—after installation and other final touches—its opening day scheduled for November 2014, the $858 million project will nearly double the midtown museum's total size to 630,000 square feet while increasing its gallery space by 50 percent, to 125,000 square feet.

With the building almost finished, it's become apparent that what Taniguchi's first models and drawings may have lacked in showmanship when they were unveiled in 1997 will likely be compensated for by the finished building's impressive proportions, architectonic poise and excruciatingly deft detailing. To be sure, this is not an architecture of bells and whistles but rather one that reflects the museum's self-enforced ethos of august sobriety. "When I first saw Taniguchi's work in Japan, it made quite an impression on me because, while it's rooted in this very modern language, it's also quite singular," said MoMA architecture and design chief curator Terence Riley (who is also a member of this publication's advisory board). "I hope there weren't too many people holding their breath," he added, "thinking we were going to throw out 75 years of what we've been doing to go in a completely different direction."

Indeed, one thing that Taniguchi does share with Goodwin and Stone—whose 1939 International Style design remains, of course, beloved to many—is his selection over more looming figures. Comparatively unknown in this country, Taniguchi emerged from a field of such overshadowing names as Rem Koolhaas, Bernard Tschumi, and Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron in an invited competition first announced over seven years ago. While other museums, hoping for some kind of Bilbao redux, were (and are still) clamoring for donor and press-baiting buildings by flashier architects, MoMA had the luxury of particularly deep-pocketed and generous trustees (and $65 million in city funds), as well as an institutional confidence that often lends it an above-the-fray disposition. "If you're not dependent on publicity or fundraising mechanisms, you can focus more closely on deciding what's best for this
institution," Riley continued. And trendy architecture was not, MoMA determined, in its best interests.

When it returns to mid-town after a two-year hiatus, the museum, which closes its temporary MoMA QNS facility to the public on September 27th, will be both familiar and virtually unrecognizable. Its Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden and Goodwin and Stone façade will be restored to their original designs, with Philip Johnson’s 1965 street façade preserved as well. Beyond that—and with the exception of other elements like its Bauhaus Stair, and certainly Cesar Pelli’s 1984 Museum Tower—very little will look the same.

The lumbering, 20-year-old Museum Tower, a 52-story condominium that resulted from the museum’s earlier sale of air rights, actually proved to be one of the redesign’s main obstacles. Embedded within the fabric of the complex, it was something to be literally worked around, though in the end, it was embraced by necessity. Rather than simply fight it, Taniguchi more visibly anchored it to the ground by peeling back the glass structure that once obscured it from the garden, and cladding its now-exposed base in black granite and black glass. “We wanted to take the Museum Tower and use it as a central element,” museum director Glenn Lowry said on a recent hardhat tour, “since we really couldn’t hide it.”

At the same time, new wings for galleries and educational facilities now flank the garden on its west and east sides. A new lobby, connecting 53rd and 54th streets, leads up to a soaring 12,400-square-foot, 110-foot-high central atrium. Sprawling contemporary art galleries on the second floor, and more intimately scaled spaces for historical collections above, invert the former hierarchy to allow the museum to place renewed emphasis on its original vanguard mission while still showcasing, in more flexible quarters, the masterworks that established it. The new architecture and design galleries will reside on the third floor. And all have been sheathed by an impossibly precise exterior of black granite, aluminum panels and crystalline, diaphanous glass.

There have been challenges, to be sure, including the neighbors. Empowered by city planning requirements, St. Thomas Episcopal Church insisted that new construction not obstruct pedestrians’ views, from 54th Street, of the stained glass clerestory windows of its Bertram
tower building, a demand that was resolved by cutting a notch into Taniguchi’s design. In addition, loading docks and storage had to be moved for residents of the Museum Tower, who were also enticed by views of a still-pending garden by Ken Smith that, in one suggested iteration, might cover much of the museum’s roof with an oversized camouflage pattern in gravel, crushed glass, and plantings.

There have also been pleasant surprises, like an eighth-floor mechanical area that proved so structurally robust that engineers realized it could act as a truss from which lower floors could be suspended, thus allowing column-free spans of as much as 180 feet in the 20,000 square-foot contemporary galleries.

Most of all, however, there is the detailing. As a volu
"If you're not dependent on publicity or fundraising mechanisms, you can focus more closely on deciding what's best for this institution," said Terence Riley. And trendy architecture was not, MoMA determined, in its best interests.

metric puzzle of rectilinear compositions, floating planes and interlocking spaces, "everything ends up being resolved in details and expressed in details," said Stephen Rustow, a senior associate principal at Kohn Pedersen Fox, the project's executive architect. "What can already be seen is a clarity and precision, as with the curtain walls, where all the panel joints have been reduced to the absolute practical minimum." Indeed, not only are these joints a mere three-eighths to a quarter of an inch, but the curtain walls themselves—as well as exterior canopies and even many of the interior walls—are hung by redundant structural systems that allow any imprecision in the building's skeleton to be corrected on its surface. Meanwhile, custom extrusions were created that fit regular drywall while providing a consistent and exacting reveal around the walls at the floors and ceilings. The overall result, one might be led to believe, is a building so plumb and level as to feel almost unreal.

"In this day and age when you're not supposed to be able to move people with straight lines, there's not a curve in this building," Riley said. "But everyone I bring through it now tells me it's so perfect and so right, as if it was so inevitable."

ARIC CHEN LIVES IN NEW YORK AND WRITES FOR ID, METROPOLIS, GG, ART & AUCTION, AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS.

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name a book an atlas of world
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I'm not sure who would pur­­
­­hase the book, beyond institu­­
tional libraries and architects
whose work is featured in it.

Thanks to Michael Sorkin's
brilliant orchestration of the
event, more than 1,200 people
packed the Great Hall at City
College on May 6th to honor
Jane Jacobs. The first to pres­­
­­ent the annual Lewis Mumford
Lecture on Urbanism spon­­
sored by the Graduate Program
in Urban Design, Jacobs was
quick to remind the audience that
City College was the first
free university in the United
States, and she was thus hon­­
­­ored to narrate the event
even though she did not always
“agree” with Mumford. How­­
ever, she conceded that the
New Yorker critic did select
good subjects to care about:
New York City.

Ostensibly, Jacob's lecture was about office skyscrapers,
but she acknowledged up front
that her interest was the sub­­
ject of time, or troubles arising from false perceptions of the
past, present, and future. With
enthusiastic flare and incred­i­­ble stamina, the 88-year-old
Jacobs plunged into her topic
for nearly two hours.

For two decades the sky­­
­­craper has been moving to
the suburbs, she narrated, an
act that has nothing to do with
terrorist attacks on the World
Trade Center, a little to do with
electronic communication, and
everything to do with cheap
car parking. Extroverted com­­
munity life generated by old
office towers in the center of the
city has been put on the
auction block!

Turning to the past, Jacobs
outlined how agrarian societies
defeated older hunting and
­­gathering societies and how
they achieved supremacy on
the backs of plantation organi­­
sation. She sees vestiges of this
plantation mentality exist­­
ing in the present as farms
and agribusinesses expand, monarch crops are exploited, and soil, water,
and fresh air are wasted. And
anywhere land planners and
real estate developers refuse to abandon this planta­­
tion mentality. Monocultural
residential tracts on an ever­­
larger scale are the result.

Jacobs eventually returned to her supposed topic and
Mumford. Mumford did not
like cities or big skyscrapers,
but he was the first American
to understand the threat the
automobile, that “insolent
Chariot,” posed for cities,
suburbs, and countryside.

He helped defeat the Lower
Manhattan Expressway pro­­
posed by Robert Moses in the
1960s by making the public
aware of its destructive effects.
But Mumford was outraged
when Jacobs' Death and Life
of Great American Cities was
published. In reflection, she
admitted, he was patronizing,
wanting her to be a loyal disci­­
­­ples, not the independent spirit
she continues to be.

CHRISTINE BOYER, AN URBAN
HISTORIAN, TEACHES AT PRINCETON.

Weighing in at 16 pounds
and standing at 12½ by 18 inches, the
Phaidon Atlas of Contemporary
World Architecture aspires to be
the heavyweight champion of
architecture reference books. It
contains over 7,000 color photo­­
­­graphs, plans, elevations, and
cross sections of 1,652 buildings
in 75 countries, constructed in the
past six years. The build­­ings
were selected by a jury of
150 of the world’s leading critics, curators, academics, and
practicing architects, though the
book doesn’t name them.

The obvious virtue of the Atlas
is that it gives attention to many
unknown buildings and provides
a sense of contemporary practice
in the far corners of the globe. While the vast majority of build­­ings
in the atlas come from
countries in advanced economies, there are 23 buildings from
Africa, 46 from South America,
and 17 from Central and South
Asia. Perhaps because of their
obscurity, they are some of the
most interesting in the book.
Once you start flipping through
the book’s 800-odd pages, how­­
ever, you realize that, if you are
an avid reader of architecture
magazines, you have seen many of
the buildings before.

The editors’ decision to include
only buildings in the ground is
perhaps a too narrow concept of
what architecture and archi­­
tectural practice is in today's
world. Architecture now en­­
compases more than just built
buildings. Many unbuilt archi­­
tectural works—conceptual
research, second-place competi­­tion entries, museum projects—
have proven to be vital to the
advancement of ideas in the
profession. Who doubts that
aspects of the striking THINK
project for the WTC competition
won't emerge in some future
building? Enthusiasts like the­­
yearly Archilab conference in
Orléans, France, or the most­­
thumbed-through book in archi­­
tecture schools, S.M.L.XI, are
likely have as much an impact
on architecture as any building
put up in the past six years. It
would be more appropriate to
call the book an atlas of world
building—not architecture.
I'm not sure who would pur­­
­­hase the book, beyond institu­­
tional libraries and architects
whose work is featured in it.

Students looking for ideas for
their next studio project would
salivate over it, but they wouldn’t
be able to afford it. It should be
noted that each of the projects
in the book gets the star treat­­
­­ment, with beautiful exterior and
­­tation entries, museum projects—
have proven to be vital to the
advancement of ideas in the
profession. Who doubts that
aspects of the striking THINK
project for the WTC competition
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call the book an atlas of world
building—not architecture.
I'm not sure who would pur­­
­­hase the book, beyond institu­­
tional libraries and architects
whose work is featured in it.

In Do-Ho Suh's paratrooper
stands on a concrete base clutch­­
ing thousands of pink threads that are the
rods of a parachute suspended across the room. On closer examination, the threads are the long loose ends of over
3,000 signatures hand-stitched on the parachute's cloth. Suh collected these sig­­
natures from friends, acquaintances, and exhibition guest books.

In a previous work that also makes
tangible the tensions between existence, memory, and space, Suh hand-stitched a
life-size replica of his New York apartment out of sheer fabric, and intended it to
be folded in a suitcase. Here, the parachute
is the ultimate personal space, providing
both shelter and safety, it's an inflatable
environment that offers soft landing into
a strange place. The coldness of the lone
paratrooper is rendered poignant by his
fierce (if tenuous) grasp on the fragile
threads that connect him to a more per­­
sonal world, composed of names. This
image came to the artist after his own
move to the United States from Korea a
decade ago, an expression of existence
and survival according to new cultural
and architectural surroundings. However, Suh's metaphorical self-portrait is not so
personal that viewers cannot relate to it.
Dropped alone in unknown territory, the
paratrooper must make connections in
order to survive.

ISSAC ASAYIS LIVES IN NEW YORK AND
WRITES FREQUENTLY ABOUT ART. SHE IS THE FORMER EDITOR OF CONNAISSANCES DES ARTS.

Do-Ho Suh's Paratrooper is an allegory of
adaptation and survival.

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Sealed,
Delivered
Andy Goldsworthy has gone urban. The British sculptor famous for fashioning domes out of local materials in natural settings took inspiration from "the immediate surroundings of Central Park and its architectural setting" for his new installation for the roof of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The exhibit, titled Stone Houses, consists of two 13.5-foot-tall columns of balanced stones, each surrounded by an 18-foot-tall, 24-foot-wide octagonal dome constructed of split rails. "[I]t's an exploration of the relationship between stone and wood... (with) stone the more fragile partner, protected by the [guardian wood rails], just as trees often hold together and protect the landscape in which they grow," according to Goldsworthy. The materials were gleaned from rural landscapes. Goldsworthy constructed the houses onsite early this month.

Andy Goldsworthy on the Roof
Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 5th Ave. Through October 31

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Ezra Stoller began photographing contemporary American architecture when it was still called the International Style. In fact his images helped define the style and introduce modern architecture to the American public. In the post-WWII period, Stoller was considered one of the premier architectural photographers in the country. There are few major American modernists who, particularly on the East Coast, that did not photograph for one magazine or another. Ezra Stoller must have been thrilled at how he captured the American modernist spirit when it was still called the International Style. In fact his images helped define the style and introduce modern architecture to the American public.

American modernist works, particularly on the East Coast, that did not photograph for one magazine or another. Ezra Stoller must have been thrilled at how he captured the American modernist spirit when it was still called the International Style. In fact his images helped define the style and introduce modern architecture to the American public.
believer in the notion that well-designed objects should be available to all, not just to the wealthy few. Many of Dresser's early designs lacked his mark or signature, and only through extensive detective work examining manufacturer's records and Dresser's sketches have many of the designs been authenticated. However, growing interest in Dresser's work among both collectors and design scholars is illuminating the tremendous extent of his work—as found in innumerable websites and e-bay listings. As an heir to the fruits of the Industrial Revolution, Dresser wholeheartedly embraced the international world shown-cased in the 1851 Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace in London. Catalog authors and exhibition advisors Michael Whitney and Charlotte Gere note that "Morris' campaign incessantly against the consumerist instincts of the age. Dresser on the other hand took the consumer culture seriously." Dresser also took his aesthetic clues from a serious study of plant morphology, and a vast array of different cultures including India, Persia, Peru, China, and especially Japan. The Dresser retrospective is particularly well-suited for viewing in the former Carnegie Mansion, which was built in 1901. Despite the Cooper-Hewitt building's air of being a Georgian country house, it—like Dresser—embraced modern technology when it was constructed in 1901. The mansion is said to be the first private residence in the United States to have a structural steel frame and one of the first residential Otis elevators in New York. While the ornate interiors often clash with the museum's contemporary design shows, they are perfectly suited to the diverse works of Dresser, which have been called both "proto" and "post" modern. Beyond such stylistic terms, the complexity and diversity of Dresser's work speaks especially to a 21st century audience that continues to embrace modernist design but also the complexities of a multicultural world.

At the invitation of the Bueell Center for American Architecture, Francesco Dal Co, chair of architectural history and theory at the University of Venice and editorial director of Casabella, lectured on Raphael Soriano, a lesser-known but key figure in California postwar modernism. Soriano, who died in 1988, pioneered a pared-down, structurally expressive domestic architecture with unusual programmatic innovations. Dal Co gave a mixed performance. While impressive and insightful when discussing Soriano's distinctive inflection of the West Coast modernist vocabulary, he became diffuse and rhetorical after moving on to the present architectural predicament. Like his teacher Manfredo Tafuri, Dal Co is well known for incisive readings of modern architecture in which theoretical depth is combined with a wide-ranging sensitivity to the political, economic, and social dimensions of design. Yet unlike Tafuri, Dal Co sometimes displayed a tendency to ignore the buildings themselves. True to form, there was no lack of provocation in Dal Co's talk, which, despite an effective and powerful opening, soon dropped any pretense of treating the problem at hand and launched into a full-blown manifesto endorsing modernist "frugality." Judging from the questions asked after the lecture, many in the audience would have liked to hear more about Soriano's life and work and less about subtexts not directly pertinent to the topic was not immediately apparent. Dal Co mentioned Bruno Taut's postwar enthusiasm for Japanese temples and a postcard sent by Gropius to Le Corbusier referring to the same monuments, but never linked them to Soriano, and thus failed to establish a convincing context for his subject's particular brand of modernist austerity. Driven by polemical intentions, Dal Co's lecture raised as many questions as it answered, which could be considered one of its strengths. Yet it left many members of the audience feeling that the speaker was more interested in criticizing architecture's contemporary situation than in extending our knowledge of this important West Coast modernist.

Dal Co launched into a full-blown manifesto endorsing modernist "frugality," which is indeed shocking: One look at his sleek, silver electroplated teapots from the late 1870s will leave the average visitor doing a double-take at the date on the exhibition label. Just as his teapots, which predate Morris, Dresser's contemporary and fellow industrialist, one may well ask whether the museum's decision to focus on Dresser's work— and not that of other designers—was the reason "museums tended not to take the consumer culture seriously..." Dresser's pro-machine aesthetic was not immediately apparent.
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POLYPHONIC MONOLOGUES

Resonating Frequencies: Dialogues on Architecture & Music
Cooper Union
The Great Hall, 7 East 7th Street
March 31 - April 21

"Is music liquid architecture?" asked DJ Spooky, turning an old cliché on its head during the lecture series, "Resonating Frequencies: Dialogues on Architecture & Music." The lectures were organized by the Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture of the Cooper Union and The Kitchen as part of the citywide New Sound, New York festival.

Curator Christopher Janney, an architecture professor at Cooper, tried to thaw out Goethe's approach for the 21st century by pairing four architects and four musicians in discussion. Janney wanted to establish a stronger understanding and correlation between one of the most ephemeral arts and one of the most substantial, and opened each dialogue with a lecture presenting themes common to both arts—rhythm, proportional structures, variation, and use.

Some may see an easy connection between music and architecture, but apparently not all the participants could. Martha Schwartz and Laurie Anderson seemed confused because neither considers herself either an architect or a musician. After a five-minute impromptu talk about his desire to produce pop music, Moby added this personal observation: "I had a really good point about the connection between music and architecture but I forgot it."

Bernard Tschumi, however, gave a clear and humorous presentation of his Sergei Eisenstein–influenced notational systems for his 1993 score for the Parc de la Villette fireworks that noted color, duration, and trajectory.

A common problem with the dialogues was that most participants presented work as a traditional lecture followed by a question-and-answer session rather than a conversation. When they did converse it became apparent that there was not enough familiarity between the participants or their works to bridge the gap to have a dialogue. The happy exceptions were Philip Glass and Thom Mayne, who were familiar with one another's work, and regularly asked each other for comment. Both explored ideas of the intersection of space and sound through their collaborative projects—Glass with director Godfrey Reggio's Naqoyqatsi, and Mayne with choreographer Frédéric Flamand's Italo Calvino–inspired dance/installation Silent Collisions.

The one point of clear consensus across all four talks was not, in the end, a revelatory one: Each speaker (and probably most members of the audience) agreed that consumers of architecture and music inevitably redefine the work for themselves.

JAMES MAY AND DEBORAH GROSSBERG (ASSISTANT EDITORS AT AN)

Some may see an easy connection between music and architecture, but apparently not all the participants could.

"Some architects use techniques not unlike sampling," Richard Meier has been sampling Le Corbusier for many years, right?" said Bernard Tschumi.

BERNARD TSCHUMI + MOBY
APRIL 21

Moby: Music is meant to be out in the world getting dirty. While I'm working on a piece, I'm thinking about a specific context (but hoping that it'll have myriad other lives).

Bernard Tschumi: [That's] a perfect definition of architecture. Architecture is never pure. It's always being transformed by what's happening in it. But that perception is quite often completely negated by architects. [Architects] would say we have to listen religiously to [music], if possible at the phiharmonic. Even architectural magazines try to show building[s] in perfect conditions. They edit people out of photographs. [Today] there is a preconceived notion of what architecture is, as there was in the 19th century a preconceived notion about music...[When] architecture or music is out in the world, it's inevitably completely out—you have absolutely no control. And that's great. However, [architects] have some control...[A high pitched] ti-ti-ti-ti-ti is not the same as a military march. But [Moby] can transform a military march in the same way that I can transform architectural archetypes. Some architects use techniques not unlike sampling [to do this]. Richard Meier has been sampling Le Corbusier for many years, right?

Moby: Some musicians use [society's] musical lexicon in a malicious way, but I feel people have it hard enough as it is. Difficult music can be great—I love Stravinsky—but I also love making music for someone who has a hard day.

BT: Architects, too, can [use their medium] as communication or alienation and separation.